

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DGB WELT DER ARBEIT REPORTS ON AFL-CIO/DGB
RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY. THE DGB WEEKLY WELT DER ARBEIT, NOVEMBER 2, GAVE AN UNUSUALLY DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE AFL-CIO CONVENTION BY ITS EDITOR IN CHIEF, RICHARD BECKER, WHO ATTENDED THE CONVENTION AS AN OBSERVER. THE REPORT INCLUDED AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY'S CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT NIXON AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE DEMOCRATS IN THE COMING ELECTIONS, AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AFL-CIO CRITICISMS OF DETENTE AND A COMMENTARY ON CONTINUING "COOL" AFL-CIO/DGB RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN AN USUALLY LONG ACCOUNT OF THE AFL-CIO CONVENTION,
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EDITOR IN CHIEF RICHARD BECKER STRESSED THE PRO DEMO-

CRATIC MOOD OF THE DELEGATES AND OF PRESIDENT MEANY. UNDER THE HEADING "INFLATION WITHOUT JOBS AND RICH MEN BECOMING RICHER," THE REPORTER QUOTES SEVERAL OF AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY'S STATEMENTS WHICH ENDORSED THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM IN THE COMING ELECTIONS AND ARE CRITICAL OF PRESIDENT NIXON.

3. HEADLINED "NO, NO, HARD WORDS AGAINST THE POLICY OF DETENTE," THE PAPER ASSESSED THE AFL-CIO POSITION ON DETENTE AND EAST-WEST EXCHANGES, POINTING OUT THAT THE DGB AND THE AFL-CIO DO NOT AGREE ON DETENTE POLICY AND THAT THE AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL STAFF EVEN REJECTS THE US GOVERNMENT POLICY TOWARDS THE USSR. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO REPORT PRESIDENT MEANY'S RIDICULE OF THE SOVIET UNION'S CONCEPT OF DETENTE AS SHOWN BY SOVIET ACTIONS IN THE MOST RECENT MIDDLE EAST WAR.

4. IN THE THIRD AREA, BECKER ANALYZED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DGB AND THE AFL-CIO AND CONCLUDED THAT ALTHOUGH RELATIONS ARE STILL COOL, "TEMPERATURES TODAY ARE TOLERABLE AS COMPARED WITH THE FROSTY PERIOD WHEN THE AMERICANS WITHDREW FROM THE ICFTU IN 1969." THE DGB'S OSTPOLITIK IS STILL THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO IMPROVED RELATIONS, BUT UNDERSTANDING IS INCREASING BECAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF OTHER MAJOR ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON WHICH AGREEMENT CAN EASILY BE REACHED, PARTICULARLY IN THE REALM OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY. THE DGB EDITOR NOTED THAT SINCE MOST MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS ARE LOCATED IN THE U.S., ACTION TO RESTRICT THE POWER OF MULTINATIONALS REQUIRES CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN TRADE UNIONS. BECKER ALSO FOUND THAT THE ALIENATION BETWEEN THE TWO TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS HAS ADVERSELY AFFECTED THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION, BUT HOPED THAT THE DGB/AFL-CIO AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FOR AN EXCHANGE OF YOUNGER TRADE UNION OFFICIALS, WHO LACK THE POLITICAL EXPERIENCES OF THE OLDER GENERATION, WOULD OPEN NEW CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION.

5. COMMENT. SENDING THEIR TOP TRADE UNION JOURNALIST TO COVER THE AFL-CIO CONVENTION, WHICH IT HAS NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DONE FOR YEARS, AND DEVOTING AN ENTIRE PAGE TO THE AMERICAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, MAY REFLECT THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE DESIRE OF THE DGB TO REBUILD A BETTER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTERS. HILLENBRAND

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